

Remarks

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the above amendments and in light of the following remarks and discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 are currently pending in the application; Claim 8 having been amended in a non-narrowing manner to remedy a potential informality, and new independent Claim 10 having been added, by way of the present response. Applicants respectfully assert that support for the changes to the claims is self-evident from the originally filed disclosure, including the original claims, and that therefore no new matter has been added.¹

In the Office Action Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,471,559 to Kashima. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of the claims be withdrawn for the following reasons.

The present invention is directed to an outboard motor. Independent Claim 1 recites an engine disposed inside an outer cover. The engine includes a crankcase, a cylinder block and a cylinder head, which are operatively connected to each other in a horizontal direction in the outer cover. An intake unit is provided for the engine and includes a throttle body disposed in a vicinity of the crankcase, and an intake manifold disposed on a side of the engine so as to extend from the throttle body, the intake manifold having a plurality of intake pipes extending towards intake ports formed in the cylinder head to be connected thereto. A fuel injector unit is disposed in substantially an intermediate portion of the intake manifold.

Regarding the rejection of independent Claim 1, Applicants respectfully assert that Kashima does not teach or render obvious the claimed features of an intake unit including a throttle body disposed in a vicinity of a crankcase, and a fuel injector unit disposed in substantially an intermediate portion of an intake manifold, as recited in the independent

¹ Applicants respectfully assert that support for new independent Claim 10 is provided, in part, from original Claims 1 and 6.

claim. Instead, Applicants respectfully assert that Kashima at most shows a throttle body 76 disposed in a vicinity of a cylinder head 56, rather than in a vicinity of a crankcase chamber 66, for example. Applicants further respectfully assert that Kashima at most shows a fuel injector 94 disposed at an end of an intake manifold 82, rather than in substantially an intermediate portion of the intake manifold 82, for example.

Applicants respectfully assert that the claimed features recited in independent Claim 1 of an intake unit including a throttle body disposed in a vicinity of a crankcase, and a fuel injector unit disposed in substantially an intermediate portion of an intake manifold, can provide numerous advantages that cannot be provided by Kashima. By way of specific non-limiting examples, Applicants respectfully assert that the claimed features recited in independent Claim 1, in which a throttle body is disposed in a vicinity of a crankcase, and a fuel injector unit is disposed in substantially an intermediate portion of an intake manifold, can provide a motor in which a time for an injected fuel to reach a combustion chamber can be extended. Thus, the fuel can be delivered to the chamber in a completely atomized state, such that hydrocarbon content of the exhaust gas can be decreased.² Applicants respectfully assert that the arrangement of the throttle body 76, intake manifold 82, and fuel injector 94 of Kashima cannot provide such advantages, as injected fuel has a decreased time before delivery to a combustion chamber 58.

Specifically, independent Claim 1 recites “an intake unit provided for the engine and including a throttle body disposed in a vicinity of the crankcase, and an intake manifold . . . and a fuel injector unit disposed in substantially an intermediate portion of the intake manifold.” Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn, and the allowance of independent Claim 1.

² From page 13, line 16 to page 14, line 9, of Applicants’ originally filed specification.

Applicants respectfully assert that Claims 2-9 are allowable for the same reasons as independent Claim 1 from which they depend, as well as for their own features. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of dependent Claims 2-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn, and the allowance of dependent Claims 2-9.

Notwithstanding the above discussion, which Applicants respectfully assert provides sufficient and adequate grounds for the allowance of Claims 1-9, Applicants respectfully assert that the claims recite further features that are not taught or rendered obvious by the references of record in the application.

By way of specific non-limiting examples, Applicants respectfully assert that Kashima does not teach or render obvious the claimed features of an intake duct disposed on a downstream side of a fuel injector unit, as recited in dependent Claim 3. Rather, in Kashima air is drawn in through an air intake chamber 72, positioned in a forward portion of the outboard motor 10.³

Further, Applicants respectfully assert that Kashima does not teach or render obvious the claimed features of a fuel supply unit disposed on a downstream side of a fuel injector unit in a space formed between a side wall of an engine and an intake manifold, as recited in dependent Claim 6.

Applicants respectfully assert that the foregoing provides alternate grounds for the allowance of the claims.

Applicants respectfully assert that new independent Claim 10 is allowable for reasons similar to those discussed above with respect to independent Claim 1. Thus, Applicants respectfully request the allowance of new independent Claim 10.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in

³ Column 5, lines 46-51.

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condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-10 is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

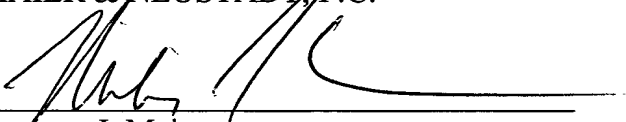
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Respectfully submitted,

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